

High Lane Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	106051
Local Authority	Stockport
Inspection number	366589
Inspection dates	19–20 January 2011
Reporting inspector	Sarah Drake

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	214
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Peter Stephens
Headteacher	Mrs Judith Morris
Date of previous school inspection	14 February 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. They observed 12 lessons and part lessons taught by nine different teachers. The inspectors held meetings with groups of pupils, staff, governors and the school improvement partner; they also spoke informally with some parents and carers. They observed the school's work, and looked at a range of documentation relating to pupils' attainment and progress, the curriculum and school management, and safeguarding. The inspectors also took into account the responses to the inspection questionnaires provided by 66 parents and carers, 16 members of staff and 83 pupils.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. Inspectors looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- The progress made by pupils in English and mathematics in Key Stage 2, with a particular emphasis on higher-attaining pupils
- The accuracy of teachers' assessment and the effectiveness with which they use the information to provide pupils with sufficiently challenging work
- The impact made by leaders at all levels on the quality of pupils' learning

Information about the school

High Lane is a broadly average-size primary school. It serves a suburban area with a stable population on the edge of the Pennines. Well-below-average proportions of pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals. There are well-below-average numbers of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds or who speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils that has special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average; an average proportion has a statement of special educational needs. The school has Healthy School status and has recently achieved the bronze Eco award and foundation level International School status. It has twice been awarded the Inclusion Mark.

In September 2009, the school's former deputy headteacher was appointed as headteacher and a new deputy headteacher joined the school. There have been significant staffing changes in the Early Years Foundation Stage over the past two years. The Nursery provision is for 20 children and on a part-time basis, so around one third of children each year join the Reception class as newcomers to the school.

A private pre-school and out-of-school provider has recently begun to operate on site. This setting did not form part of the inspection but a report of its quality will be available on the Ofsted website once it receives its first inspection.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

This good school provides its pupils with an interesting and enjoyable start to their education. Over their time at High Lane, pupils make good overall progress to reach above average levels of attainment by the end of Year 6 from starting points in the Nursery and Reception Year that are broadly as expected for their age. In recent years, progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 has been stronger than in Key Stage 2. The leaders' increasingly rigorous monitoring and well-targeted actions over recent months have had a good impact on raising standards in English, so that these are now significantly above average. Pupils' attainment in mathematics at the end of Year 6 is closer to average and, in both subjects, not all pupils who are capable of doing so reach the higher levels expected for their age. Pupils develop mature personal and learning skills to support their future emotional and economic well-being. Their behaviour, attendance and adoption of healthy lifestyles are outstanding.

Inconsistencies in the quality of teaching mean that, while it is good overall, pupils' rate of progress is uneven. The school analyses strengths and weaker areas in individuals' learning, but, in the main, teachers do not use the information well enough when planning lessons to ensure challenge for every pupil. The increasingly creative links being made between subjects are resulting in pupils showing great enthusiasm for learning. They apply their skills in English and information and communication technology (ICT) well throughout the day to research, record and experiment. Good relationships abound because adults offer pupils good quality care and support, so that classrooms usually hum with purposeful activity.

The headteacher's passion for the school and determination that its pupils should achieve as well as possible provide a strong driving force for improvement to which staff are responding well. Leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage are currently satisfactory as new staff members become used to their roles. All leaders, including the governing body, are closely involved in school evaluation and action planning. The leaders have an accurate view of the school's strengths and are taking decisive, effective action to tackle its weaker areas. The school has good capacity to improve further.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise levels of attainment by the end of Key Stage 2, with a particular focus on higher-attaining pupils and mathematics, by:
 - ensuring pupils' rate of progress is consistently good
 - providing high levels of challenge for all pupils

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- providing more opportunities for pupils to apply their mathematical skills to solve problems.
- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is consistently good or better by:
 - basing planning closely on the information known about individuals' needs
 - sharing with pupils clear success criteria for what different groups are expected to achieve
 - maintaining a good pace throughout all parts of the lesson.
- Strengthen the quality of leadership and management in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**2**

Throughout the school, pupils show great enthusiasm for their learning; they enjoy what they do. They settle very well at the start of lessons, generally listen carefully to adults and each other, and waste little time when moving from one activity to another. From a young age, pupils concentrate well, take pride in their work and reflect on what they have done in order to improve it. Excellent relationships and behaviour mean that pupils collaborate well when working in small groups, including everyone fully as they bounce ideas off each other. The level of work in lessons and in pupils' books is, overall, above average for their age. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 produce some dynamic writing. Their mathematical work covers all aspects of calculation, but there is less evidence of them applying their skills to solve problems. Most pupils, including those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, make good progress and achieve well. As the school has identified, there is room for some, particularly more-able pupils, to achieve even better.

Pupils feel at ease in school and have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe, for example on the internet. They are polite, tolerant and have a good understanding of the important qualities of successful communities, but their knowledge of the cultural diversity of British society is more limited. Pupils carry out their responsibilities such as play leaders, school councillors or eco warriors well and run the healthy tuck shop efficiently. Their views influence school improvement; for example, the current plans to install a trim-trail, further promoting the benefits of exercise. The school is a model in the local authority for the uptake of school dinners and the healthy content of pupils' lunch boxes. In response to sustained action by the school, attendance levels have risen markedly and are now high. This, together with pupils' very positive attitudes and good ability to transfer their skills to different areas, provides them with a strong basis on which to build for a successful future.

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These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	2
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	1
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	1
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

How effective is the provision?

Teachers' good subject knowledge, classroom management and relationships with pupils, combined with confident use of ICT, create a highly effective environment for learning. Lessons usually start at a brisk pace with teachers recapping on prior work and making the learning objective clear to pupils, so that they set to work purposefully. The weekly planning outlines different tasks for those of different ability and, due to teachers' accurate assessment of pupils' skills, the groups are organised appropriately. However, teachers do not always make sufficiently clear their expectations for those of different ability either in their planning or, crucially, to the pupils themselves. This means that, sometimes, opportunities are missed to provide optimum challenge for all. Teaching assistants provide good quality support to those who find learning more difficult and teachers usually question pupils well during their independent work to help correct misapprehensions or move learning forward. Only occasionally do they draw the whole class together in the middle of such periods to share examples of work and refocus pupils' concentration, providing a new dynamic and pace to the lesson. The marking of work is usually helpful, providing pupils with clear guidance about the necessary next steps for improvement.

The links made between subjects provide pupils with good opportunities, for example, to write at length about the Victorians, but opportunities for problem-solving are less well developed. A good range of visits, including a reintroduced residential experience for Year

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6 pupils, and visitors such as authors or those to promote pupils' fitness, adds sparkle to pupils' learning. Good links with the local community, such as with the allotment association, bring an added dimension to their personal, social and environmental education. The recent innovation of a Young Apprentice project for higher-ability mathematicians in Year 6 has provided them with some good challenge. Well-targeted support, based on a careful analysis of individuals' needs, enables those who find learning more difficult to make good progress. Good care, support and guidance also ensure that those joining the school or preparing to leave for secondary school feel confident in their new surroundings. Pupils confirm that staff take their concerns seriously and deal with them effectively. As one said, 'They even encourage you to get over your fears of things like spiders.'

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

A thorough analysis of the school's context, strengths and weaknesses, which invited the views of all stakeholders, has led to highly effective actions. These have resulted in many improvements: pupils spending more time talking about their learning; rising standards in English; increased attendance levels; enrichment of the curriculum; and the development of a more rigorous system through which to track pupils' progress. The strong senior leadership team works well together, monitoring the quality of the school's provision and supporting staff to increase their skills and confidence. The school runs efficiently and effectively. The governing body is knowledgeable, committed and holds staff to good account for pupils' progress, as well as matters of finance, health and safety. The school's policies, procedures and practice ensure that pupils are well safeguarded and also that no pupil is disadvantaged or suffers discrimination. The school knows its community well and is taking effective steps, for example through exchanges with another school in Stockport, to increase pupils' awareness of others whose life experiences are different from their own. Links with schools in France and more recently Sri Lanka, combined with sponsorship of children in Cambodia and Senegal, provide pupils with good opportunities to celebrate and deepen their understanding of other cultures. Good partnerships with parents, carers and a wide range of outside agencies enhance the curriculum, the support for individuals and the overall quality of pupils' learning experience.

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These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Most children join the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills that are broadly typical for their age. Their personal skills are generally well developed, but those in early reading, writing, calculation, and knowledge and understanding of the world are less strong. In the supportive, bright environment, they settle happily and form good relationships, quickly growing used to routines and taking turns. They enjoy, for example, making sandwiches for a tiger's tea party or hunting for pictures of birds, which they then order to make a block graph. Children make good progress so that, by the time they join Year 1, the great majority are working comfortably within the expected levels in all areas of learning and significant numbers exceed these. Adults carefully observe individuals' development of skills and record the steps they need to take next, although the planning does not always reflect this information sufficiently well to ensure that all children are suitably challenged or supported. This is particularly so for those times when children are free to select activities for themselves, including choosing to learn independently in the fresh air. Adults take effective steps to promote children's safety and well-being. Most parents and carers are happy with the day-to-day communication. Most teaching staff are relatively new in post and work on a part-time basis. This means that, currently, the leadership is satisfactory, while roles and responsibilities are organised and time for monitoring is built into the timetable.

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These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

Views of parents and carers

The great majority of parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire and all those spoken with were very pleased with their children's experience at the school. They find staff approachable and supportive and are confident that their children are kept safe and enjoy learning. A minority raised a variety of concerns, most prominent of which hinged on levels of communication, particularly about changes of staffing in the Reception class. Inspectors discussed the issues raised with the headteacher and were given wholly satisfactory responses.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at High Lane Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 65 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 214 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	37	57	22	34	4	6	1	2
The school keeps my child safe	41	63	23	35	1	2	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	25	38	25	38	9	14	2	3
My child is making enough progress at this school	26	40	31	48	5	8	1	2
The teaching is good at this school	27	42	32	49	3	5	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	25	38	29	45	8	12	1	2
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	31	48	30	46	2	3	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	24	37	33	51	1	2	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	27	42	28	43	7	11	1	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	20	31	33	51	6	9	3	5
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	20	31	34	52	4	6	1	2
The school is led and managed effectively	28	43	30	46	4	6	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	30	46	29	45	4	6	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	59	35	3	3
Primary schools	9	44	39	7
Secondary schools	13	36	41	11
Sixth forms	15	39	43	3
Special schools	35	43	17	5
Pupil referral units	21	42	29	9
All schools	13	43	37	8

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 August 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



21 January 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of High Lane Primary School, Stockport, SK6 8JQ

Thank you for the warm welcome and help that you gave the inspectors when we visited your school recently. We enjoyed our time at High Lane and are pleased to know that you do too. You are polite, very well behaved, work hard in lessons and attend school on almost every possible day. Well done!

You go to a good school. Children in the Nursery and Reception classes get off to a good start. With all the new staff there, we have asked the school's leaders to keep a good eye on making sure that this continues. Those of you in other year groups also make good progress so that by the end of Year 6 most of you are working at above-average levels, especially in writing. However, your progress is a bit uneven, so we have asked the senior teachers to make sure that it is good all the time. We have asked them to focus particularly on mathematics and on those pupils who find learning easy.

You know a great deal about keeping healthy and are keen to take part in extra activities and clubs. You are also very helpful around school and in the community. Congratulations on your 'Service above self' award. Your teachers plan interesting activities for you to do. We have asked them to make clear to you exactly what they expect you to achieve in your lessons so that you can focus hard on this and make even better progress.

Your school is a happy community because the adults take good care of you and you take good care of each other. I hope that you continue to make the most of the opportunities offered to you and wish you well for the future.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Sarah Drake

Lead Inspector

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